

H.R. 3684

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I join tonight in the celebration of a significant next step in the passage of a \$550 billion, over 5-year infrastructure package, with roads and bridges, highways, sewer systems, broadband, flood mitigation, and coastal resiliency.

If our responsibility as Senators is to listen to the American people, this bill is a product of hearing their voices. It is a bipartisan package, which does not increase taxes but does meet the needs that we have heard of.

Now, first, let me join others. Senators PORTMAN and SINEMA, they just did a fantastic job of leading this effort. Our colleagues, both those here who are speaking but those who are the chairs and ranking members of other committees have really guided us tremendously and produced a great work.

I would also like to acknowledge our House colleagues: BRIAN FITZPATRICK, JOSH GOTTHEIMER, the Problem Solvers Caucus, who on their side of the Chamber have also seen fit to already endorse our effort. And when they did, it was certainly a strong wind of encouragement for us.

But most of all, I thank the American people. The Constitution gives Congress the responsibility for infrastructure. Our duty gives us the responsibility to listen. If you listen to the American people right now, they are concerned about jobs, the economy, safety, and quality of life.

With this bill, we give voice to their concerns. For example, as regards safety, there is \$110 billion for better highways, bridges, and roads. Along the way, by the way, you create quite a number of jobs.

My State—every State—has been affected by flooding. There is \$3.5 billion for flood mitigation; \$500 million to make storm drains bigger, so that if there is a tremendous rain event, systems are better able to hand this.

There is money for sewer systems, money for broadband. Many places in my State do not have high-speed internet. This addresses it in my State and every other.

Quality of life. There are people in my State who, on a Sunday morning, you could drive in 15 minutes to where they are going to work, and on a workday, it takes them an hour and a half. That is 3 hours a day that they are away from their family, 3 hours a day that they are not doing something productive, 3 hours a day of their life which is wasted—times the number of days they work in a year. This will improve their quality of life.

And, by the way, did I mention that it will create a lot of jobs along the way?

So whether it is to benefit the economy, to create better paying jobs, to make people safer, to improve the quality of life, I feel as if we have done it.

Will Rogers said that elected officials are nothing but the hired help. I agree with that. We were sent here to do a

job. This legislation shows that Congress can still work, can still do its job for the American people.

With that, I yield to my colleague from Utah.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

H.R. 3684

Mr. ROMNEY. Mr. President it is an honor to be here. They say that making law is like making sausage. But I have seen sausage made, and it is a prettier process, and it is a lot easier. But this has been a lot more rewarding. I have enjoyed the time we have had together.

My good friend from West Virginia talked about how much money we are spending here, how big this is. But let me note something, underscore something: This is paid for. This is not going to raise taxes on people. This is, instead, taking some money that was already appropriated, not used for COVID relief. We are going to bring that back and use it to help build infrastructure.

This is a bill which is paid for, and it gives the American people something that they desperately need, and that is an upgrade in our infrastructure.

Now, of course, you know it was several months ago that this group came together. We call ourselves affectionately the G-10. Senator PORTMAN and Senator SINEMA have shown enormous patience and persistence and resolve getting this across the finish line. I want to thank also particularly Senator CAPITO for laying out the foundation for what we proposed at the very beginning, which we built upon and has led to the final piece of legislation.

As has been said, neither side got everything we wanted. There are a bunch of things in this bill I don't like, I would take out. There are things in this bill I know my Democratic friends don't like and would take out. But the nature of getting work done in Washington is to be able to come up with something that has enough good for both that we actually get it done. And the American people have been waiting one President after another after another, saying let's improve our infrastructure, and it just doesn't get done. This time, we have.

Now, I know that Republicans had a choice here. We could let the Democrats just do something on their own. With reconciliation, they could have spent trillions of dollars without any of our help. But the President and the leaders of the Democratic Party here and our friends said: No, let's work together and see if we can do something collectively.

Now, I know Members of both parties have mischaracterized our efforts as somehow linked to paving the way to the Democrats' \$3.5 trillion wish list. If you don't think our Democratic friends are going to push for that monstrosity with or without this bill, then I have a bridge in Brooklyn to sell you. They

are going to push for that anyway. This is a separate piece of legislation. I love this one. I hate that one. These are two very different things, and there is going to be an effort, obviously, to stop that bill from going forward.

This is not perfect. It is paid for.

I want to note as well that if the Democrats would have written the bill entirely on their own, Utah would probably have ended up on the short end of the stick. But because of our involvement in this effort, some of our rural States like mine have been able to have a seat at the table, and that means limiting the spending on bad policy that only benefits the rich coastal cities in the East and the far West. So I am proud of this bill because it benefits Americans across the country.

For decades, elected officials have talked about addressing our Nation's infrastructure. This infrastructure bill turns that talk into reality without raising taxes on hard-working Americans or adding to our debt.

I am proud of my colleagues. It has been fun working with them. It was challenging from time to time, I am sure, to have to listen to me, they would tell you, but I am proud of what we did together, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Now, I would respectfully request that we yield just a minute more to Senator PORTMAN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

H.R. 3684

Mr. PORTMAN. I thank my colleague from Utah for his wise words. Yes, it is true that there was a \$2.65 trillion package proposed by President Biden for infrastructure, and we are at \$550 billion. So it is bipartisan. Both sides made concessions. But it is very different than what we would have seen, and again, it is an alternative with no taxes.

I do want to say that there was another effort underway before we got started. Actually, SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO was part of our efforts early on and then decided to try to work with the White House to come up with a proposal. They were not successful in the end of bridging the gap between where the White House was and where they were, and the bipartisan approach that we used here ended up being more successful, but we are building on the foundation that they created. So you will see Senator CAPITO managing this bill for our side. I appreciate her support the other day on our first vote, and I appreciate the hard work they put in to help us to be able to come to this point today.

I yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

H.R. 3684

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, well, I thank my colleagues for their fine speeches, and I very much appreciate them.

Now, the bipartisan group of Senators has finished writing the text of

the infrastructure bill, and in a moment, I will take the procedural steps to make their legislative language the base of the bill here on the floor.

I want to congratulate the Members of the bipartisan group for their efforts. We haven't done a large bipartisan bill of this nature in a long time. I want to especially thank the staffs, who burned the midnight oil many a night, for their diligence, their hard work, their intelligence, and their skill.

Thank you, staff, listening and a few in the room here tonight.

These days, it isn't easy to do major bills in the Senate, especially bipartisan ones, so I have tried to prod the negotiators along when they have needed it and given them the space when they have asked for it. In the end, the bipartisan group of Senators has produced a bill that will dedicate substantial resources to repair, maintain, and upgrade our Nation's physical infrastructure. It has been decades—decades—since Congress passed such a significant stand-alone investment, and I salute the hard work that was done here by everybody.

In order for our workers, our businesses, our economy to succeed in the 21st century, we cannot have infrastructure that is stuck in the last century. The bipartisan infrastructure bill is designed to bring our infrastructure up to date for a new century, and that is a significant achievement.

Now, for the future, for the information of Senators, here is how we plan to move forward. I will offer the text of the bipartisan infrastructure bill as a substitute amendment, as I promised, making it the base of the bill.

Then the Senate will work to consider additional amendments to the bipartisan framework. Given how bipartisan the bill is and how much work has already been put in to get the details right, I believe the Senate can quickly process relevant amendments and pass this bill in a matter of days.

Then I will move the Senate along the second track of our infrastructure effort and take up the budget resolution.

A bipartisan infrastructure bill is definitely necessary, but to many of us, it is not sufficient. That is why soon after this bill passes the Senate, Democrats will press forward with a budget resolution to allow the Senate to make further historic, vitally important investments in American jobs, American families, and efforts to reverse climate change.

Look, I have set out two very ambitious goals for the Senate this summer, and we are now on the way to achieving both. As I said, both tracks, this one and the other, are very much needed by the American people, and we must accomplish both.

Now, after many days of waiting and a lot of hard work and a lot of compromise, I ask that the clerk report the pending business.

## INVESTING IN A NEW VISION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND SURFACE TRANSPORTATION IN AMERICA ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3684) to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

AMENDMENT NO. 2137

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute.)

Mr. SCHUMER. I call up the Sinema-Portman substitute amendment No. 2137.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New York [Mr. SCHUMER], for Ms. SINEMA and others, proposes an amendment numbered 2137.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask to dispense with the further reading of the amendment so we may get forward to other amendments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

## MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now resume morning business, with all previous provisions in order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

## INVEST IN AMERICA ACT

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I want to thank the majority leader and all of my colleagues. I want to mention two other things briefly.

No. 1, Senator TESTER, who has been intimately involved in this effort, could not be here with us to tonight, but he was with us all day and has been up with us for weeks and weeks.

I do think it is really important—the base bill that we will be negotiating will be the EPW bill. That committee is chaired by TOM CARPER from Delaware. He has a lifetime record, from the House to his time as Governor, to his time in the Senate, of always working in a bipartisan fashion. He has spent literally decades on infrastructure. He will be carrying the ball for the majority on this. We support him, and we commend him, and we wouldn't be here if he hadn't put together the kind of base bill that we were then able to build upon.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for the duration

of my remarks, not to be limited by 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## INVEST IN AMERICA ACT

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, it is an honor to serve in this body. It is an honor to serve with the men and women from whom we have just heard.

The Senators from whom we have just heard are some of my favorite people in the Senate. For that matter, they are some of my favorite people. I like them, Democrats and Republicans alike. They are hard-working. They have been working really hard. They have gotten very little sleep in the last few days.

Notwithstanding my great respect for them personally and professionally, I rise today because I have got real concerns with this bill, a lot of them. Those concerns, unfortunately, can't be overcome by the respect I have for the individuals involved or my gratitude to them for their willingness to work hard for months on end and through the night on many, many nights in the recent past. These individuals are hard-working, and they genuinely want to do good.

I have a different perspective on this bill. I recognize that I am the only one with that perspective on the floor right now, but I assure you, Mr. President, I am not alone. I am not alone among Senators, and I am sure not alone among those I represent and those represented by the 100 of us in this body. There are a number of Americans who see that all is not well with the way we spend money, the people's money, within the Federal Government, and it is to them that I would like to direct my remarks tonight.

Let's talk for a minute, first of all, about infrastructure. One of the things that I think makes this an appealing piece of legislation is the fact that it deals with something that most Americans intuitively understand we need. Infrastructure is something that is somewhat uniquely positioned for government. It doesn't always have to be through government, but it can be, and it often is because it is a public good. It is a public good that is supposed to be accessible to all, not excludable, and it is difficult to have that without some sort of a master plan.

Infrastructure is also something that can make the difference between someone having to spend hours of their life each day stuck in gridlock traffic and being able to spend time at home with their family.

Infrastructure benefits us in countless ways. The fact that infrastructure is a good thing and that we need it is a different question from whether we can afford the infrastructure plan in this particular case. It is also a separate question from whether Federal infrastructure is what we need, at least to this degree.